



LOCAL HELP FOR PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE

ASK SHIP

YOUR MONTHLY MEDICARE Q&A

Q. What is the Medicare Annual Enrollment Period? What changes can I make to my plan during this time?

A: Medicare's Annual Enrollment Period is October 15 – December 7. During this time, you can make changes to various aspects of your Medicare Advantage and Part D drug coverage.

Every September, Medicare enrollees receive an Annual Notice of Change (ANOC) letter from their insurance companies to let you know what changes may affect your plan for the following year. Premiums can increase; provider coverage can change; dental premiums may change; and you may see changes to which prescription drugs are covered under your plan.

During the annual enrollment period, you can do the following:

- Drop a Medicare Advantage Plan
- Cancel your Part D plan
- Enroll in a Part D plan
- Change from one Medicare Advantage plan to a different one

- Change from Medicare to a Medicare Advantage plan
- Change from one Part D prescription drug plan to another

Any changes you make will go into effect January 1 of the next year. There is also a Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period, from January 1 – March 31 each year. During these 3 months, you can:

- Switch to another Medicare Advantage plan (with or without drug coverage), or
- Disenroll and return to Original Medicare. If you do so, you can also join a Part D prescription drug plan.

One of the best tools that can help you during the Medicare Open Enrollment is the Planfinder at www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan. It takes you step-by-step through available Medicare Advantage and Part D prescription drug plans while taking your prescription drug costs into consideration.

You do not need to register with the Website to use it; however, you can safely

enter your Medicare number in the tool to view your own current plan enrollment information and specific plan costs. This can help you compare plans and their costs specific to you.

Changes to Medicare supplement insurance policies (Medigap) can occur any time of year. However, your premium maybe increased due to your current health status or you may be denied a new policy if you are not in a guarantee issue period. That is when you first turn 65 or lose other coverage.

Every year, you should review both your Medicare health and drug coverage to ensure you are getting the best coverage for your needs at the best price.

If you have questions about Medicare, call SHIP at 1-800-452-4800, 1-866-846-0139 TDD or online at www.medicare.in.gov. You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter.

SHIP is a free, unbiased counseling program provided by the Indiana State Department of Insurance.